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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 ABU DHABI 000275

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DEPT FOR ISN A/S ROOD, PMCNERNEY, RPAN, CRUSSELL  
COMMERCE FOR WWYSONG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/15/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ETTC](#) [IR](#) [AE](#)  
SUBJECT: UAE CREATES "COMMODITY CONTROL COMMITTEE"

Classified by Ambassador Michele J. Sison for reasons 1.4  
(b and d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On 14 February, the UAE provided a letter outlining the creation of a federal "Executive Committee on Commodity Control Procedures" to manage and oversee UAE export controls. The committee shares most of its objectives and many of its members with the existing Counterproliferation Task Force (CTF). Post intends to deliver the draft response para 6 below. (NOTE: ISN A/S Rood will co-chair the next CTF on March 1 in Abu Dhabi.)  
END SUMMARY.

Establishing a New "Commodity Control Committee"

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¶2. (C) On 14 February, Yousef Al Otaiba, Director of International Affairs for the Office of the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, sent a letter -- copied below -- to the Ambassador announcing the creation of a new "Executive Committee on Commodity Control Procedures" to strengthen export control laws, procedures and enforcement. According to the letter, "the new committee will have clear oversight and management responsibility of the United Arab Emirates' export control procedures."

¶3. (C) The letter lays out nine objectives for which the committee will have oversight. The objectives are strikingly similar to those provided by the UAEG in the first Counterproliferation Task Force (CTF) Meeting. The objectives can be collectively grouped into several areas: preventing the exploitation of UAE territory for illegal shipping purposes, federal and local coordination, ensuring proper training and resources, and following international standards.

¶4. (C) The letter includes a list of committee members -- many of them already CTF members, including the same chairman and deputy. Notably absent are representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Economy. Significantly, the letter also includes Abu Dhabi-based State Security and the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince representatives.

¶5. UAE Export Controls Letter

BEGIN TEXT:

13 February 2007

Saqr Ghobash  
UAE Ambassador  
United States  
Washington, D.C.

Michele J. Sison  
USA Ambassador  
American Embassy  
Abu Dhabi

Subject: Export Controls

Dear Ambassadors:

As you know, the UAE is committed to stopping the transshipment of sensitive and controlled goods and technologies through our seaports and airports. Consistent with that obligation, I wanted to make you aware of the UAE government's enhanced initiatives to strengthen export control laws, procedures, and enforcement.

With the region's largest seaport and airport, we acknowledge the difficult challenge and accept the critical responsibility to deter illegal transshipment. It is a challenge not unfamiliar to the United States as it works to enhance its own export control procedures and enforcement. As we have in the past, both nations will benefit from close cooperation and joint initiatives in this area. Together, we both recognize that preventing the flow of illegal and sensitive goods is essential to the security and stability of the region and to each of our nations.

The most important element of the enhanced initiative is the creation of a new Executive Committee on Commodity Control Procedures. The new Committee will have clear oversight and management responsibility of the United Arab Emirates' export control procedures. Attached is a

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full list of the Committee members.

Specifically, the Committee will assure that the standards and resources are in place to:

- 1.QCheck that inspection procedures are properly maintained.
- 2.QAssess inspection procedures of incoming, outgoing, transit and stocked goods and propose such envisioned development as to avoid loopholes.
- 3.QEstablish field teams for control, follow up and reporting on inspection procedures at harbors and duty-free zones.
- 4.QEstablish a data base with direct access to security apparatuses nation-wide in order to check data on company, individuals and items imported, exported or re-exported. This will ensure easy and quick access of information and support decision-making process.
- 5.QStrengthen coordination among such bodies as Customs and involved organizations.
- 6.QStreamline procedures and ensure that any outstanding or future ones will not undermine UAE commercial and economic privileges considered part and parcel of national security.
- 7.QFollow up pertinent international standards and experiences to shortlist suggestions suitable to UAE conditions without undermining state security and solid UAE international commercial position.
- 8.QSolicit such technical help as to secure outlined objectives.
- 9.QReceive and follow up pertinent subjects and requests.

Whilst the committee's responsibilities are relevant to all trading partners Q and fall within the context of a comprehensive UAE Federal export control law in its final stages of drafting Q the committee's role has particular relevance to the United States in light of earlier specific cooperative efforts between our two countries to strengthen export controls including:

Dubai Port joining the U.S. Container Security Initiative (CSI) Dubai Port joining the Department of Energy's Megaports Initiative The UAE Cabinet's approval in June 2005 of the country's adhesion to the International Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism and International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism Dubai Ports World joining a federal pilot program to test the methods used to screen U.S.-bound cargo for radiation (December 2006)

As always, we value the close cooperation and support of the United States in deterring the shipment of sensitive goods. With this in mind, we do have some concerns about U.S. intelligence and enforcement procedures; specifically relating to a need for the relaying of more timely and accurate information. We have a shared goal and I am sure you will agree that this can only be achieved with the right intelligence received at the right time.

The representation of the UAE's Executive Committee on Commodity Control Procedures is reflective of the Federal, cooperative and comprehensive approach that is being taken by the UAE in relation to enhanced export control.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss our initiatives and concerns with you directly.

Yours sincerely,

/s/  
Yousef M. Al Otaiba  
Director of International Affairs

cc:  
H.E. Khaldoun Khalifa Al Mubarak,  
Chairman of the Executive Affairs Authority  
Ministry of Interior  
Federal Customs Authority  
Ports Customs & Free Zone Corporation  
Ministry of Justice  
General Headquarters of Dubai Police  
Chief of Staff Office,  
UAE Armed Forces General Headquarters

Committee Members

Brigadier Mohammed Ahmed Da'en El-Qumzy, General

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Headquarters of Dubai Police, as Chairman.

Brigadier Abdul Aziz Maktoum El-Sharify, Director, Preventive Security, Ministry of Interior, as Vice-Chairman.

Yousef Manai Al Otaiba, Director of International Affairs, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Court, as Member.

Director/Acting Director of Customs Organization, as Member.

Director/Acting Director of Dubai Customs, as Member.

Counselor Dr. Mohammed Abdul Rahim El-Awady, Assistant Undersecretary for International Cooperation and Planning, Ministry of Justice, as Legal Adviser.

Colonel Hamad El-Shamsy, State Security, as Member.

Lieutenant Colonel Dr. Riyadh Mohammed Khalfan Balhoul, General Headquarters, Dubai Police, as Rapporteur.

Major Mansoor Abdullah Mohammed El-Bastaky, General Headquarters, Dubai Police, as Member.

Representative for the Armed Forces (Border Guards), as Member.

END TEXT.

Draft Response to UAEG  
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16. (C) Post believes this new committee duplicates much of the work of the UAE CTF Team and excludes several important ministries with roles in UAE export control regulations. Post proposes to respond to Al Otaiba with a letter asking for clarification on several issues. We will also suggest including the members from the new committee in the March 1 CTF meeting to avoid duplicate efforts.

Begin text of draft response:

"The US Government appreciates the desire of the UAE Government to strengthen its export controls and enforcement and greatly appreciates the opportunity to discuss the initiatives laid out in your February 13 letter. The news of the UAE export control law being in its final stages of drafting is encouraging and we look forward to its enactment.

The US applauds UAE initiatives to prevent the flow of illegal and sensitive goods but is unclear about how the creation of the new Executive Committee on Commodity Control Procedures will interact with the UAE's existing Counterproliferation Task Force (CTF) team. However, it appears that the two entities have the same goals and largely the same members. We are also concerned about how the US will interact with the new committee because the US Department of State's counterpart -- the Ministry of Foreign Affairs -- and the US Department of Commerce's counterpart -- the UAE Ministry of Economy -- are both absent from membership on the new Committee. In the U.S. Government system, both the Departments of State and Commerce play significant roles in the export controls area.

In the interest of expanding this important dialogue, the US suggests that those members of the Executive Committee on Commodity Control Procedures who are not Counterproliferation Task Force members -- such as Ministry of Justice, Dubai Customs, State Security, an Armed Forces representative, and yourself -- be included in the existing CTF and that these individuals/agencies also attend the scheduled March 1 CTF meeting.

We value the continuing dialogue on this matter of importance and look forward to working together towards our common security and nonproliferation goals."

End draft response.

17. COMMENT: Given upcoming CTF, Post would welcome any additional feedback from ISN on this latest development. Al Otaiba telephoned Ambassador February 12 on the eve of his departure on a private trip to the United States to report that Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed had

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made the decision to create a "new export controls committee" to meet U.S. export controls concern. Ambassador responded that although the US appreciated the Crown Prince's continuing attention to export controls issues, we needed clarification on the role of the new committee vis-à-vis the existing CTF. She also noted that actions such as the passage of a UAE export controls law, shutdown of Mayrow and affiliated companies and action on the 2/13 arrival of the MSC Joanna (U.S. origin test equipment destined for Syria) would also do much to

address U.S. concerns. Nonetheless, Embassy welcomes the inclusion of stronger Abu Dhabi participation in the export controls/counterproliferation dialog. END COMMENT.

SISON